



Community Review

SUMMER 2013

Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Washington State Department of Social and Health Services

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Director's Message

Eric Raff, ODHH Director



Greetings! So far, 2013 is a year of changes and challenges. As with every new Governor, changes are to be expected. Last January, Governor Jay Inslee appointed Kevin Quigley as the new Secretary of the Department of Social and Health Services. Secretary Quigley appointed Pat Lashway as the Assistant Secretary of Administration and External Relation Administration (AERA), formerly a 'Chief of Staff' position. AERA is becoming the business and administrative backbone of the Department. Accordingly, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and Sexual Commitment Center (SCC) were reorganized under the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration. For the interim, ODHH reports to AERA. Pending a DSHS review, ODHH may be reorganized with another Administration providing client services or continue to report to AERA.

In the fiscal year 2014 budget, ODHH had proposed two staff reductions because the decreasing number of landline subscribers meant less revenue. At the same time, the new DSHS management tasked ODHH to reduce indirect costs and shift these dollars to client services. This includes some staff reductions over the next several years. It is anticipated that once DSHS decides how to permanently reorganize ODHH, clerical and administrative support would be provided by an Administration in an effort to become more efficient and lean. Hence, this led to the decision of eliminating the Customer Relations and Office Manager positions.

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The Northwest Justice Project

The Northwest Justice Project (NJP) is Washington's publicly funded statewide legal aid program for low-income persons and groups in Washington. Through its 17 offices and CLEAR, Washington's centralized intake, advice and referral hotline, NJP provides free legal information, advice, limited assistance, representation, community education, outreach and other community based advocacy. With more than one hundred attorneys working in 17 offices located throughout the State of Washington, NJP's staff is highly diverse and multilingual.

NJP operates a centralized intake and referral system known as CLEAR, based in its Seattle office.

CLEAR serves all 39 counties in Washington through a telephone hotline system. This has become the primary point of entry to the civil legal services delivery system for all low-income people in Washington State seeking legal help. NJP's offices are presently located in the following communities: Bellingham, Everett, Seattle, Tacoma (satellite offices at Western State hospital and in

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Office of the Governor
Jay Inslee

DSHS Secretary
Kevin Quigley

**DSHS Assistant Secretary
Administrative and External
Relations**
Pat Lashway

ODHH Management
Eric Raff,
Director

Robert Lichtenberg,
Assistant Director

Lien Ngo-Tran,
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SHS Program Manager

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TRS Program Manager

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Program Support

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

William Crites,
IT Manager

Trevor Kosa,
IT Database Specialist

Brian Clark,
IT Network Specialist

OFFICE SUPPORT

Vacant
Executive Assistant

Lucas Doelman,
Office Assistant

Ideas – Speak Up – Action and Awareness for Hearing Loss

by Berle Ross

Last fall, while researching assistive listening devices, I came across an International campaign to increase awareness on hearing loss sponsored by the Oticon Foundation and IDA Institute. The IDA Institute, located in Denmark, creates and shares innovative knowledge to help hearing care professionals address the psychological and social challenges of hearing loss and apply patient-centered care methods. The Oticon Foundation is a commercial foundation whose main purpose is to safeguard and develop the commercial activities of William Demant Holding and William Demant Invest and to sponsor charitable causes.



The campaign asked for ideas on promoting hearing loss awareness. In the spur of the moment, I submitted an idea. I suggested that organizations work with ice cream companies like Ben & Jerry's to create a new "Hearing Loss Ice Cream" flavor. Information on how to protect your hearing would be advertised on the container—perhaps chocolate-covered hearing aids in the ice cream itself? There are many ways to be creative.

Although this idea wasn't the winning idea, it did make the top 10 out of more than 400.

For more information on the finalist and the top 10 ideas, you can watch this on YouTube:



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GCcfhCLJerk>

Congratulations Karen Utter

Please join ODHH in congratulating Karen Utter, President of Hearing Loss Association of Washington! In a recent announcement received from the Hearing Loss Association of America, Karen has been selected to receive the Hearing Loss Association of America 2013 Keystone Award. The Keystone Award is a special honor awarded to persons for outstanding achievement and/or contribution to the establishment, advancement, and continued success of the national organization. This award was presented to her at the National Hearing Loss Association of America Conference in Portland, Oregon on June 30th.

Hearing Loss Association of Washington: www.hearingloss-wa.org

Hearing Loss Association of America – Information about Living with Hearing Loss



http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Soc1kDcils&list=UU_GUzYz2tPB3iG9V56UevTQ&index=9

The Center for Childhood Deafness & Hearing Loss.... also known as CDHL *by Kris Ching*

The Washington State Center for Childhood Deafness and Hearing Loss, also known as CDHL, is a state agency that was established when Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill 1879 was signed into law on May 7, 2009. The Washington School for the Deaf (WSD) remains a residential school in Vancouver and is included in CDHL. The law directs CDHL to provide statewide leadership for educational services for children who are deaf, hard of hearing and deaf-blind (D/HH/DB), which must include the full range of communication modalities. It states that CDHL must collaborate with appropriate private and public partners and provide professional development and training of educators and other school staff who work with D/HH/DB children. A key component of the law directed CDHL to collect information through statewide stakeholder meetings to identify service availability and gaps for children who are D/HH/DB. CDHL put together a core work group of people who lead the information gathering process. The core group had representatives from several state agencies (all serve D/HH/DB children and/or adults), parents, members of the Deaf Community, Educational Service Districts (ESDs), school districts, and private schools. From the fall of 2009 to spring 2010, CDHL held 14 stakeholder meetings throughout the state and distributed online value satisfaction surveys for teachers and related service providers, parents, administrators, early intervention/involvement

specialists, educational interpreters and educational audiologists. CHDL used the information collected to compile a report to the Legislature, which was submitted in December 2010. The full report can be found at www.cdhl.wa.gov by clicking on CDHL's Report to the Legislature.

Since then, CDHL has been putting its money where its mouth is by developing a multi-agency approach by teaming up with several public and private agencies and organizations. These partnerships in collaboration are reflected in the new comprehensive CDHL Statewide Outreach Team that currently consists of 38 highly skilled professionals from around the state who have many years of experience working in Deaf Education, including one representative from the West Coast office of Gallaudet University Regional Center (GURC). This team includes positions in: ASL/English Bilingual Education, Educational Audiology, Educational Interpreting, Combined Vision and Hearing Loss, Curriculum & Assessment, Deaf & Hard of Hearing Program Administration, Early Childhood Education, Listening & Spoken Language, Literacy, Multiple Disabilities, School Counseling, School Psychology, Signing Exact English, Speech & Language Development, Speech-to-Text Transcribing, Teachers of the Deaf, and Transition (18-21). CDHL also created a single point of contact in the state. Families, school districts and other agencies can now contact the Statewide Outreach Team's toll free number and single email address for easier contact to access support and resources. (See end of article for more information)

The Statewide Outreach Team offers consultative technical assistance, evaluation services, and trainings to both public and private schools. These services help school staff so they are better equipped with the knowledge, skills and vision for optimal classroom learning, and understand the importance of access to communication with peers and adults, not only in the classroom but in all school activities, including lunch time, recess and electives. Ultimately, the goal is to guarantee students who are deaf and hard of hearing, or who have combined vision and hearing loss, equal access to communication, information, learning, and social opportunities, regardless of their communication modality.

This will happen by building support locally and working together.

We do not intend to duplicate efforts, but capture what is available locally and help strengthen existing programs.

CDHL recently joined the Child First Campaign with the goal of Washington State becoming a Child First state. Child First Campaign was developed and is driven by national organizations such as National Association of the Deaf and the Conference of Educational Administrators of School & Programs for the Deaf (CEASD) to ensure that the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) appropriately addresses the language, communication, and educational needs of deaf and hard of hearing children. Some of the underlying principles of Child First that CDHL is focusing on are:

- Communication and language is a human and educational right
- Access to all interactions
- Language deprivation is disabling
- Hold high expectations for kids
- One size does not fit all
- Complete, accurate information for parents

We have learned that collaboration is the name of the game in order to make progress and change. Similar to the African proverb, "It takes a village to raise a child," we know it will "take a village" to ensure families receive timely and appropriate services for their infant/toddler and that children who are D/HH/DB have the supports so they can access everything at school. We all want our kids to have enriching educational journeys and become positive members of the community.

Please contact any of the agencies below for more information for your child or student. We look forward to working with you.

CDHL Statewide Outreach Team (for children who are deaf or hard of hearing): (855) 342-1670
outreachtteam@cdhl.wa.gov or www.cdhl.wa.gov

WSDS (for children with combined vision and hearing loss or deaf-blind): (800) 572-7000
wdsd@psesd.org or www.wsdsonline.org

WSSB (for children who are blind or visually impaired): (360) 696-6321 x124 or craig.meador@wssb.wa.gov



Deaf Interpreter Standards for Education

by David Brenna

In the 2012 Legislative session, a budget proviso directed the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) to identify educational interpreter assessments that were specific to classroom interpretation for deaf students and set a score as a minimum standard. The proviso did not address requirements for districts to hire interpreters; that would come in the next session in House Bill 1144.

“ For two days in late March, a passionate group of professionals, with vast expertise and experience, discussed, debated and analyzed the best available information. ”

The work was a little unusual for PESB. Our primary mission is setting policy for educator certification. The “standards” the Legislature called for were to be published for districts to consider in hiring educational interpreters for the deaf. The professionals addressed by the standards are not certified educators, but the mandate to create a specific set of educational interpreter standards, and the skills required, reflected the reality of the important role of the interpreter. Academic language is necessary to impart knowledge to all students, and quality transliteration is imperative if deaf students are going to have an equal opportunity to learn.

PESB quickly reached out to the Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) in DSHS. With their help, PESB soon discovered a talented and committed group of professionals more than willing to assist us with our charge. By the end of 2012, PESB had assembled an executive group of experts in the field, and constructed a Request for Qualifications to solicit and contract for a consultant. The executive team then set a plan for bringing together stakeholders for a “workgroup” meeting to identify the interpreter assessments, and set a standard.

In February 2013, PESB hired under contract Cheryl DeConte Johnson, a nationally recognized leader in deaf education for children. Cheryl had been a part of a group that made recommendations to the Legislature in 2010 that included a call for educational interpreter standards. With the help of the executive team, PESB re-convened many of the members of the stakeholder committee responsible for the Legislative report and invited them to participate in the work.

For two days in late March, a passionate group of professionals, with vast expertise and experience, discussed, debated and analyzed the best available information. With the help of Cheryl as facilitator, the workgroup rated the assessments that were available and constructed a recommendation for the PESB. The Board will meet in Olympia on July 30 to consider the recommendations of the workgroup. The draft report has been provided to stakeholders across the state for their review and input. You can find the on the PESB website (www.PESB.WA.gov): send your comments via email to david.brenna@k12.wa.us.

About HB 1144: Even as the workgroup was concluding its report, the 2013 Legislature considered and passed the bill that now requires school districts to hire interpreters that meet the standards the PESB will consider in July. The bill adds another charge to PESB related to the National Interpreter Certificate as a requirement in the future. PESB would like to extend its thanks to Eric Raff, Carol Carrothers, Rick Hauan and Kris Ching



The Governor signed HB1144 on Tuesday, May 7, 2013 to enact the law requiring school districts to comply with educational interpreter standards. Various stakeholders attended the signing including Harley Applin, (standing next to the Governor's left side) a student from Snohomish County who testified last year during the 2013 session about the need for standards.

for helping make this process work. Additional thanks to the members of the workgroup listed below. Finally, to the wonderful people who are, or support, the deaf and hard of hearing, PESB is proud to have contributed in a small way.

Education Interpreter Standards Workgroup Members: Paul Bert, John Bresko, Linda Darling, Eloisa Williams, Marie Rendon, Theresa Smith, Karn Mool, Colleen McKearney, Brent Stark, Ann Curry, Paul Glaser, Tracy Wilson, Mary Jaeger, Peggy Mayer, Char Parsley.

Telecommunications Relay Service Updates

by Steve Peck

- **Sprint Relay Contract Extension.** DSHS/ODHH and Sprint have agreed to extend Sprint Relay's existing contract for the provision of WA Relay services for two more years through June 30, 2015. For more information, contact Steve Peck by email: pecksc@dshs.wa.gov or 360-902-8000 V/TTY.

- **Federal Communications Commission (FCC) adopts text-to-911 rules.** The FCC adopted a report and order setting a Sept. 30 deadline for commercial mobile radio service (CMRS) carriers and other providers of interconnected text message services to provide automatic bounce-back messages when text-to-911 service is not available in an area.

June 30 is the deadline by which the four national wireless carriers have agreed to send bounce-back messages as part of a voluntary agreement with the National Emergency Number Association and the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials International. The national carriers also agreed to begin offering text-to-911 services by May 15, 2014. For more information in regards to the text-to-911 rules, go to the following hyperlink: http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2013/db0517/DOC-321040A1.pdf.

- **Internet Protocol Captioned Telephone Services (ICTS).** In a recent order announced on May 9, 2013 by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the Commission adopted interim rules (1) prohibiting all referrals for rewards programs and any other form of direct or indirect inducements, financial or otherwise, to subscribe to or use, or encourage subscription to or use of, IP CTS; (2) requiring each IP CTS provider, in order to be eligible for compensation from the Fund for providing service to new IP CTS users to register each new IP CTS user as part of the registration process, to obtain from each user a self-certification that the user has a hearing loss that necessitates

IP CTS to communicate in a manner that is functionally equivalent to communication by conventional voice telephone users, and

where the consumer accepts IP CTS equipment at a price below \$75 from any source other than a governmental program, to also obtain from the user a certification from an independent, third party professional attesting to the same; and (3) requiring IP CTS providers to ensure that equipment and software used in conjunction with their service have a default setting of captions off at the beginning of each call, so that the consumer must take an affirmative step to turn on the captions each time the consumer wishes to use IP CTS. The IP CTS Misuse Order was accompanied by a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking seeking comment on, among other things, whether to make the interim rules permanent. For more information in regards to the iCTS ruling, go to the following hyperlink: http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2013/db0509/DA-13-1045A1.pdf

- **Internet Closed Captioning Rules.** Rules requiring closed captions on live and near-live programming delivered via Internet protocol (IP) go into effect on March 30, 2013. Captions make video programming accessible to viewers who are deaf or

hard of hearing by visually displaying the audio portion of the video programming. IP closed captioning is a requirement of the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010 (CVAA).

The rules that become effective on March 30 apply to IP-delivered video programming that meets the following criteria:

- *The live or near-live programming is shown on television with closed captions on or after March 30, 2013; and*
- *The programming is not in the IP programming distributor's or provider's inventory before it is shown on television with captions.*

Closed captioning requirements for prerecorded programming that is not edited for Internet distribution went into effect on September 30, 2012. Closed captioning requirements for other kinds of video programming, including prerecorded programming that is edited for Internet distribution and programming that is already in the IP distributor's or provider's inventory before it is shown on television with captions (archival content) will be implemented at later date. For more information in regards to the Internet Closed Captioning rules, go to the following hyperlink: http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2013/db0327/DOC-319817A1.pdf

Need Assistance Processing Phone Calls?



The Washington Relay Service can help you make a convenient connection.

Washington Relay is a free service provided by the Washington State Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) ensuring equal communication access to the telephone service for people who are deaf, deaf-blind, hard of hearing and speech disabled.



For More Information:
Call 1-800-422-7930 (V/TTY) Visit www.washingtonrelay.com

DVR Welcomes New Statewide Coordinator of Deaf Services



Lynn Odom, Statewide Coordinator of Deaf Services (SCD) for DVR comes to Washington DVR with 26 years' experience providing customer service and Vocational Rehabilitation services for D/HH/DB customers. She most recently worked as a Rehabilitation Counselor for the Deaf at Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation Services (OVRs). Prior to OVRs Ms. Odom was the Program Manager for the Oregon Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services, and a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor and Director for Signs of Life in San Diego, CA.

As the Statewide Coordinator of Deaf Services, Ms. Odom's role is to provide statewide support and resources to the offices and staff of DVR for D/HH/DB needs. Ms. Odom is also the DVR liaison for community partners serving D/HH/DB customers; her duties also include providing support and professional development for the Rehabilitation Counselors for the Deaf (RCD's) for DVR statewide. Ms. Odom is the advisor to DVR for the Limited English Proficiency regarding language issues.

Ms. Odom has a 5-point Action Plan; these priorities have been laid out for the RCD's and DVR staff. These priorities include:

- 1) Assistive Technology Plan~ Assess and modify or update Assistive Listening Devices (ALD) used in DVR offices.
- 2) Promoting relationships with all DVR staff and Community Partners
- 3) Create Vendor capacity in rural areas to better serve Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deaf Blind individuals
- 4) RCD Group~ Provide leadership, quarterly meetings, professional development
- 5) Trainings and Recruitment

In addition to the above priorities, Ms. Odom is working with the RCD's to address 10 Goals/Priorities set out by the RCD's.

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Bremerton), Olympia, Vancouver, Aberdeen, Pt. Angeles, Longview, Wenatchee (satellite office in Omak), Yakima, Pasco (satellite office in Walla Walla) and Spokane (satellite office in Colville). Most of these offices serve low-income people in several counties.

NJP also has several programs that provide specialized services to targeted populations, including a Farm Worker Unit, a Native American Unit, Foreclosure Prevention Unit, Medical Legal Partnership, Veteran's project, CLEAR*ASL, and programs that serve refugee and immigrant victims of domestic violence in King County. The CLEAR*ASL program allows eligible individuals who prefer to communicate in ASL over video phone to connect with a staff attorney who is fluent in ASL. The attorney will conduct an intake in ASL by video phone. This program is in addition to the ability to call CLEAR and speak with any available attorney through a relay operator.

NJP handles civil legal problems facing low-income people due to lack of income, problems with education, employment or loss of employment, disabilities, discrimination, consumer abuse or illegal business practices, physical or family safety, and barriers in seeking help, services or accessing the courts or other means of resolving disputes or addressing their needs. These problems often occur in situations involving domestic violence, eviction or other loss of housing, job conditions or lost wages, educational barriers, lack of access to or loss of government benefits or health care, debt collection, transportation needs, language or cultural barriers to accessing social services or justice systems, etc.

NJP provides a significant library of client-oriented legal education materials at www.washingtonlawhelp.org and information about NJP and its programs at www.nwjjustice.org.

Persons seeking legal help outside King County are asked to call NJP's CLEAR intake line at 1.888.201.1014, or in King County, dial 211, for case screening and appropriate referral to NJP local offices or other civil legal aid providers in their community.

National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program Update

by Kelly Robison

The NDBEDP is a national program required by the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act (CVAA). The NCDEDP provides \$10 million annually nationwide for the distribution of communications equipment to low-income individuals who are deaf-blind. As of July 2, 2012, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has certified ODHH to be the National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program (NDBEDP) administrator for Washington. Washington State is allotted up to \$197,000 for the first year of the 2-year NDBEDP pilot project.

We are very excited to report that 30 clients have submitted applications to participate in the program. To date, most of those clients have been approved and assessed to determine equipment needs. Soon, they will be receiving various types of equipment that will make communication more accessible! If you know of someone who has both a profound hearing loss and vision impairment, they may qualify to apply for participation.

For more information about the NDBEDP, visit our website at www.dshs.wa.gov/hrsa/odhh/NDBEDP.shtml, email us at ndbedp@dshs.wa.gov or call us at 1-800-422-7930.

Opportunities for personal support for those who are Hard of Hearing

by Karen Utter, Hearing Loss Association of Washington

Although many people won't wear hearing aids or cannot afford them, there are strategies that may help. For so many people struggling with an invisible condition that limits their ability to communicate with others, their frustrations are very real and some circumstances are dire. Not being able to hear and understand will result in social isolation, lost job opportunities and family struggles that aren't understood.

Communications in medical settings and hospitals is another huge problem. Most hard of hearing people know that they can't hear well but have no idea what to do about it. They may buy hearing aids but don't understand the whole spectrum of appropriate and needed assistive technology and aural rehabilitation.

When people with hearing loss attend our local self-help groups, we learn that each of us has the responsibility to educate the people we communicate with. One of our members recently wrote, "I really didn't understand all the tools or information I needed to resolve my communication



When people with hearing loss attend our local self-help groups, we learn that each of us has the responsibility to educate the people we communicate with.

breakdowns. I'm at a point in my life that I need this help more than ever. Receiving feedback on how and what to teach another person is so helpful to me right now. I find that the medical doctors I see are just about all uninformed about hard of hearing people and have a stereotypical view of us. Now I have an idea on how I can teach the doctors I see! I've felt so overwhelmed! When I say they don't listen, I meant the doctors didn't sit facing me so I missed their expression. I didn't clearly understand so many things about my hearing loss! I've learned such useful information from only a few meetings."

Now she gets it; our member can advocate for herself and know what she needs to understand better.

This is the advantage of attending meetings and learning to advocate for our own needs as people who don't hear well. Information and advocacy shared in a supportive and friendly atmosphere with others who have similar issues can be as important as buying a hearing aid.

(Local HLA chapter meetings are found online at: <http://www.hearingloss-wa.org/chapters/index.html>)

The Release of ODHH's New Website

by Suzy Mannella

ODHH is pleased to announce the soon-to-be release of our new website with three new features.

1. Statewide Community Calendar of Events
2. Online Directory of Services
3. Interactive Maps

It was time to upgrade the website to cater to the need of all Internet users, especially those looking to find community events, and access resources and services to support and provide solutions for the public.

ODHH offers a centralized statewide calendar of community events as a public service. The purpose of the Community Calendar of Events is to bring the community and services together. If you have an event you

would like to include on our calendar, there is a guideline and online form available on this webpage: <http://odhh.dshs.wa.gov>

ODHH will post the events for anyone to view in the community calendar.



The online Directory of Services includes information found in the publication, "Directory of Services," with an addition of updated information including international, national and federal organizations. The online Directory of Services will be updated periodically, while the printed version is published every two years.

There are two geographic interactive maps available. One map shows three regions with a list of interpreters and referral agencies in your county. The other map shows where the regional service centers are located.

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After 30+ years with the State of Washington, Rena Patch, Executive Assistant, retired on May 30th! Rena joined ODHH in October 2004 and served 9 years with us. Recruitment to fill the Executive Assistant position is underway. Lorraine Tveten, Program Support, left to pursue college in Nebraska. Lorraine joined ODHH in December 2009 and served nearly four years with us. The Program Support position supports the Telecommunication Equipment Distribution Program. It was temporarily filled by Pamela Reeves, formerly in the Customer Relations position. Diana Sutherland joined ODHH in April 2010 and served 3 years with us as Office Manager, a position that was eliminated. Fortunately, Diana found another state job. We thank and will miss Rena, Lorraine and Diana who have been invaluable in providing crucial support to ODHH operations!

The Medical Interpreter Task Force continues to look at how to improve access to healthcare through sign language interpreting. During March through May, Theresa Smith and Shawn Broderick have been facilitating community forums which were split into Friday evenings with deaf consumers and Saturday mornings with sign language interpreters. The purpose was to better understand the deaf people and interpreters' challenging experiences with interpreting in healthcare settings. In the fall, the MITF will be meeting with healthcare providers to obtain their perspectives and experiences.

Concerning educational interpreter standards, read more about it in the Professional Educator Standard Board (PESB) article in this newsletter. However, the latest is that standards will be presented to the Professional Educator Standard Board for approval on July 30th. The PESB meeting is open to the public. Check out the PESB website for details. www.pesb.wa.gov During the recent 2013 legislative session, HB1144 passed and signed into law by Governor Inslee on May 7th. It was a historic day! The bill would require school districts to hire only educational interpreters who meet the standards, thus improving the quality of access to basic education. However, the bill also asks PESB to make a recommendation in December on the use of national certification within the standards.

Recently, I've had an opportunity to attend the Hearing Loss Association of America convention in Portland, Oregon, usually

After 30+ years with the State of Washington, Rena Patch, Executive Assistant, retired on May 30th!



attended by hard of hearing, late-deafened and some deaf individuals. As a deaf person with different communication needs, it was an enlightening experience to better appreciate where these individuals are coming from. While we can agree that we all want equal access opportunities to effective communication, the HLA convention reminds me how we go about it has remarkably different approaches. Hard of hearing and late-deafened individuals typically seek solutions involving medical care, cochlear implantations, hearing aids, and other assistive technologies. There is also a greater emphasis on coping with hearing loss which happens later in life for most of these individuals. However, deaf, hard of hearing, and late-deafened do share some common issues or concerns involving civil rights, captioning, and telecommunication technologies. It was also a good opportunity to meet with active HLA of Washington leaders whom I've become acquainted and friends with over the past years as well.

As you may know, ODHH revenue is based on a Telecommunication Relay Service (TRS) surcharge billed to landline telephone subscribers which is rapidly decreasing because of increasing cellular or wireless telephone services. ODHH had to propose budget reductions in the annual FY14 budget and in FY15, would have to keep telecommunication services and reduce or eliminate all other services. At the same time, during the 2013 Legislative Session House Bill 1971 was introduced. It changed the way that telecommunications services are taxed, using a uniform sales tax on all telecommunication services to replace the patchwork of different taxes and fees currently in place for the telephone land lines, wireless cellular communications, and cable / voice over internet protocol (VOIP)

subscribers. The legislation would generate new state revenue for future biennium.

The HB1971 eliminated the dedicated TRS surcharges currently collected from landline telephone subscribers and replaces it with state General Fund (GF-S). However the funding for ODHH must

be appropriated via an operating budget bill. Fortunately, SB5034 making 2013-2015 operating appropriations directs \$10.1 million of General Fund revenues "for services and support to individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind." Both the HB1971 and SB5034 passed and signed into law! ODHH will be funded with state funds of approximately \$5 million for each fiscal year 2014 and 2015. This will change how we do budgeting and accounting. In the future, ODHH will have to submit requests for state funds to ensure adequate funding is incorporated in future operating budget bills.

It has been a challenging year with a new DSHS administration, changes from telephone revenue to state funds, a busy legislative session with two additional special sessions, preparing for a government shut-down if the legislature had not passed a budget, and the loss of several key staff that impacted how we manage certain duties. In spite of these challenges, I remain optimistic that ODHH can achieve cost reductions, become more efficient, be reorganized within the Department that will strengthen opportunities to improve access to DSHS services and continue to serve people who are deaf, hard of hearing and deaf-blind as ODHH has done for 30+ years.

ODHH gets frequent calls asking where to take sign language classes. If you know of any sign language classes available in your area, please contact us! We're happy to share the information with our callers.

Do you have a success story, advocacy issue, news, or want to share what matters most to you?

You can send articles via email to odhh@dshs.wa.gov or call 360-339-7382 VP for the ODHH Community Review Newsletter.



THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
**Telecommunication Equipment Distribution
(TED) Program**

TED is the statewide telecommunications equipment distribution program serving the Deaf, Deaf-Blind, Hard of Hearing and Speech Disabled residents of Washington State.

WHO

TED is looking for contracted trainers to work with clients in the Central Washington and Bellingham areas.

WHAT

Duties include:

- Deliver equipment and teach the client how to use it.
- Troubleshoot problems when they occur.
- Conduct outreach activities to educate your community about the TED Program.
(Background Check required)

HOW

Do you know how to:

- Use amplified telephones, ring signaling devices, and TTY?
- Communicate with people who are Deaf or have hearing loss?

Contact us today!

Kelly Robison
TED Program Manager
Call: 800-422-7930 V/TTY
Email: robiskd@dshs.wa.gov



Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
PO Box 45301
Olympia WA 98504-5301

Address Service Requested

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Olympia, Washington
Permit No. 297

Office of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing

(360) 339-7382 (VP)
Toll Free: 1 (800) 422-7930 V/TTY
(360) 902-8000 V/TTY

Email: odhh@dshs.wa.gov

Web site: <http://odhh.dshs.wa.gov>

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